

CONVOY DISPATCH



VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975

Feb. 2001 # 190

Members Show International VP Jon Rabine the Door

Rank & File Power Wins in Seattle Local 763

"We won the election because we represent hope for the future. For years our members had poor representation, and no way to change the situation. Now they have leaders willing to work with them to make their hopes a reality."

—David Reynolds
New Secretary Treasurer
Seattle Local 763

The 4,500 members of Seattle Local 763 voted for the Rank and File Power

Victory in Atlanta!

Georgia Teamsters end
Hoffa take-over of Local 728
see page 11

Slate on Dec. 23, and in the process voted out International Vice President Jon Rabine. They did more than change officers — they opened a new chapter in Teamster history in the Pacific Northwest.

Rabine, Hoffa's key official in the northwest region and head of the Washington State joint council was rejected by his own members. The members chose rank and file power over old guard unionism.

Reynolds says his biggest job is to, "Empower the members. ... We have a fundamentally different outlook on what a union means than Rabine does. He had private meetings with management and then told members what they were going to get. We're going to involve and unite members, and be accountable to our members."

The new leadership has lowered

the salary of the secretary-treasurer from \$110,000 to \$65,000, a savings of \$45,000 a year and a signal that the leaders are not abusing their positions for personal wealth. They are preparing a budget plan that will put the union's funds to work for the members.

Reynolds ran on a slate with other reform activists, including Kirk Stephenson, who narrowly won as president. Stephenson is a long-time member of TDU and a school bus driver. Local 763 is over half public-sector Teamsters but also includes nearly 2,000 private-sector workers who drive buses and ambulances, and work in offices, plants and shops.

Rabine Overdraws Account

During his last days in office, Rabine went on a spending spree with

the members' money. He gave out some \$40,000 in Christmas bonuses to himself and his appointees and staff. He overdrew the union checking account by thousands of dollars, forcing the new leaders to cash in CDs to cover the checks.

Newspaper Strike Disgrace

Worse, Rabine broke ranks with the other unions at the *Seattle Times* to make a handshake deal with management on a contract just two days before a major strike. When 1,000 members of the Newspaper Guild walked out, Rabine announced he had a deal and directed 550 Teamsters to cross the lines. The Seattle labor movement was horrified at this betrayal and cheered the Local 763 rank and file victory.

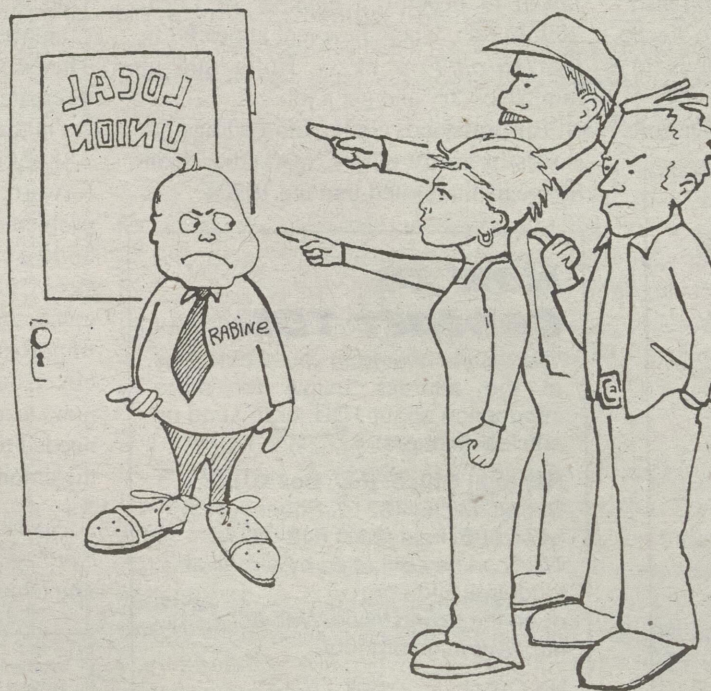
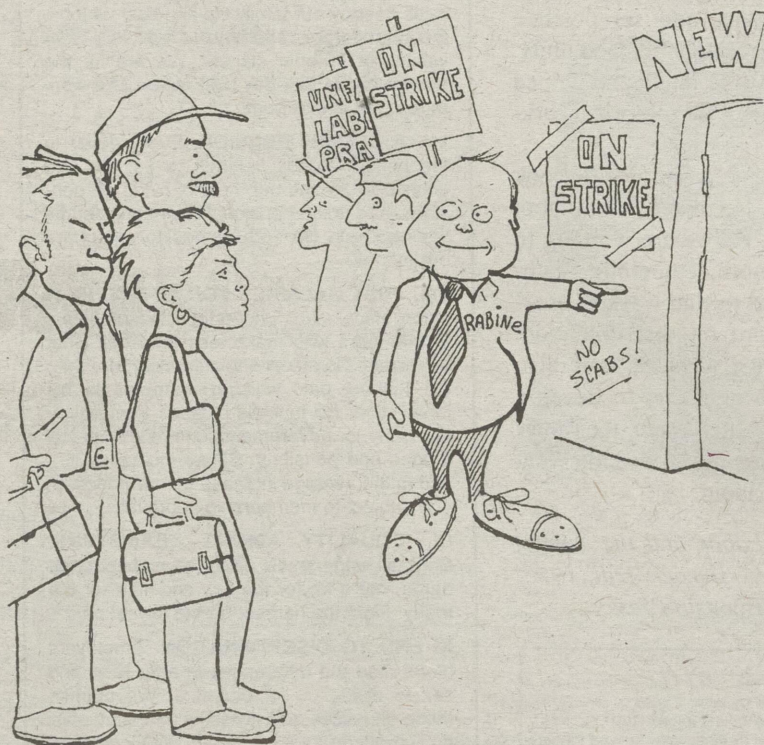
If this betrayal of solidarity was not enough, Rabine then "lost" the contract he claimed to have negotiated with the *Seattle Times*. He told the new officers it was on a computer disk that he accidentally misplaced.

Rabine lost not only his local post, but was then forced to step down as president of Joint Council 28, which covers some 50,000 Teamsters in Washington. This means he lost two of the three salaries that were paying him some \$225,000 a year.

Hoffa and Rabine may have a secret plan for that situation. Hoffa's "personal representative" to Tacoma Local 313 has stated he wants that local put into trusteeship, and he wants Jon Rabine installed as trustee. But if the members of Local 313 have anything to say about that, it will not happen.

Rabine Orders Members Across Picket Line ...

Members Order Rabine Out the Door!



Fifty-Five Years Ago

A Look at African American Teamster History During WW II

At one time, trucking (and carting) was a job held by a relatively high percentage of African Americans. This was true in the South and also in some northern cities. During the twenties and thirties this changed. Many African Americans found themselves pushed out of truck driving positions and into dock work, and also into certain city driving like coal delivery and garbage pickup.

This was the situation into the 1940s (and beyond), although some positions opened up in city delivery. When African Americans returned home from the war they found that fighting to defend the country did not always translate into equality or good jobs at home. They also found it was impossible to break into linehaul jobs in the Teamsters.

"Fellows, I am just a truck driver like you, trying to make a living. Now we are in a war and we are trying to win. I'd hate to think that I belong to an organization that is less democratic than any other when the President is asking us all to cooperate."

Festus Harrison, appealing to Detroit Local 299 to allow black Teamsters into higher paid driving jobs.

Detroit is an example of those times. There were nine locals in Detroit. Six of them admitted black members. All six had jurisdiction over intra-city work, in coal, ashes and garbage. Local 299 however, headed by James Hoffa Sr., excluded black workers from membership. The local also worked with trucking employers to keep black drivers from getting positions in higher paying linehaul jobs.

The story of Festus Harrison, a Detroit



In the 1940s black members struggled to move from dock and city driving positions to higher paid road driving jobs.

driver, shows how it could be. Harrison had 12 years experience driving moving vans as a member of Local 247. Wanting to move into line-haul driving, he went to Local 299 to apply for membership. He met with Hoffa, who stated that it was against the policy of the union for blacks to pull over the road.

Harrison didn't give up. He persisted and was then invited to a local meeting to present his case. To those present he said, "Fellows, I am just a truck driver like you, trying to make a living. Now we are in a war and we are trying to win. I'd hate to think that I belong to an organization that is less democratic than any other when the President is asking us all to cooperate."

He also pointed out that Crispus Attucks was the first to die for his country, and that the blood-bank system was started by a black doctor named Drew.

Nevertheless, Harrison wasn't allowed to become a member of Local 299. In fact, when the event appeared in the *Detroit Free Press*, Hoffa said to him, "Now try and get a job."

But his stand, along with courageous stands by many others, sparked a chain of events that lasted into the 1970s.

The U.S. Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) investigated and held hearings in Detroit. They concluded that the situation in Detroit was typical of a national pattern, and that trucking employers and the union were excluding blacks from better-paying road jobs.

The agency had no enforcement power, however, so the problem persisted. Not until the 1960s and 1970s were black drivers able to challenge the color barrier in trucking. *Bing v. Roadway Express*, filed in 1967, eventually resulted in an order that Roadway and the Teamsters stop this discrimination. Other cases soon followed — at T.I.M.E.-D.C., Lee Way Motor Freight, Interstate Motor Systems, Preston and many others — all now relics from trucking's past. The battle continued into the 70s and 80s when TDU members were involved in a number of important cases.

Of course some locals and many individuals were different, and set positive examples for non-discrimination and unity. Their contributions were many and helped to create new openings for minority workers in the union.

Looking back is often one way to look forward. Progress has been made, but problems still exist. As we are working to build a strong and more democratic Teamsters Union, we need to find ways to overcome the past record on discrimination. Important in its own right, it will also effect our ability to organize, to develop new leadership and to create the unity needed to take on the boss — exactly what the union should be about.

Source: "Black Labor and the American Legal System" by Herbert Hill, 1985, The University of Wisconsin Press.

Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers—every kind of Teamster, and spouses, too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 15-member International Steering Committee was elected in November 2000 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had over 400 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BY-LAWS. All business agents and stewards should be elected. Vacancies in office should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs elected by regions. An end to trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent until proven guilty, right to remain on the job until final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers; and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for anything less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right, backed up by our union, to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND FIVE-DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four-day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25-and-out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in his jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for membership, and subject to membership approval.

IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the differences in age, race and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

TDU International Steering Committee

Co-Chairs:

Dan Campbell, Chicago, Local 705
Joe Fahey, Watsonville, Calif., Local 912
Ashley McNeely, Minneapolis Local 2000
Michael Savoir, Kansas City, Mo., Local 41

Organizer:

Ken Paff, Detroit

Trustees:

Erik Jensen, Minneapolis Local 320
Matt Latzo, Baltimore Local 355
Joyce Mims, Atlanta Local 728 spouse

Members:

Homer Lambert, Chicago Local 743
Maria Martinez, Pasco, Wash., Local 556
Raul Rodriguez, Jr., Los Angeles Local 630
Michael Ruscigno, New York Local 802
Lorene Scheer, Seattle Local 174
Willie Smith, Columbus Local 413
Chris Sullivan, New York City Local 237

Alternates:

Alex Adams, Cleveland Local 407
Tom Sheibley, Brockton, Mass., Local 653
Benita Vela, Chicago Local 710 spouse

How to Contact TDU

We want to hear from you. Contact us at the address below for more information about TDU, or to send us articles or letters.

National Office: P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich., 48210. Phone: (313) 842-2600. Fax: (313) 842-0227. TDU can be contacted by e-mail at: tdudetroit@tdu.org or on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.igc.org/tdu/>

NY Office: P.O. Box 170131, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217 Phone: (718) 624-7746. Fax: (718) 875-9336. E-mail: tdueast@igc.org

Copyright © 2000 by Teamsters for a Democratic Union. Contents may be reprinted by labor unions or rank and file organizations for use in the promotion of union democracy. Employers and all others may not use these materials without the specific, written permission of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. If material is used, its source, TDU Convoy Dispatch, must be cited.

UPS Hits Close to \$3 Billion Profits, Federal Express Scrambles to Catch Up

UPS cleared \$2.8 billion in after-tax profits in 2000, up 20 percent over the year before.

These strong profits are the result of the company's 70 percent market share in the domestic ground market, and continued growth in air business. Air volume increased by eight percent in 2000.

Federal Express is trying hard to win a larger share of the ground market. They have signed a seven-year agreement with

the U.S. Postal Service to haul some express and first class mail. The Postal Service will place Fed-Ex drop boxes in 10,000 post offices across the country.

Fed-Ex now controls 51 percent of the air market, but wants to expand into the faster growing ground market. The company plans to spend \$171 million to expand its home delivery network.

Fed-Ex, however, has more overhead in unused capacity, making it more vul-

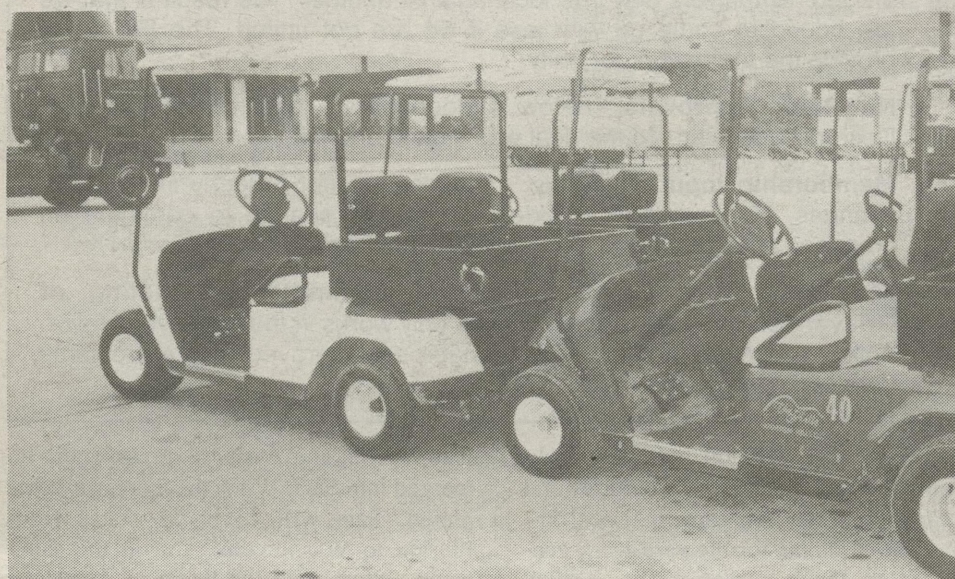
nerable to an economic slowdown. This is reflected in its lower seven-cents income per dollar revenue, compared to 15 cents per dollar at UPS, even though Fed-Ex is nonunion.

The company's resistance to unionization has led to some of its unused capacity. By keeping their ground and air systems separate, Fed-Ex has remained under the Railway Labor Act. Under this outdated law our union is

required to win one nation-wide vote to unionize, a serious obstacle to Teamster organizing and giving Fed-Ex workers the opportunity to join a union.

Fed-Ex is also saddled with a high debt-to-capital ratio: 55 percent, compared to 23 percent for UPS.

As long as UPS management respects its number-one asset — qualified Teamster employees who make the system work well — UPS will continue to grow.



Golf Carts Replace Classic Brown Step Van

New Orleans package car drivers were shocked when UPS rented several golf carts for use during peak season. Management expected drivers to park the carts at their homes, plugged in to charge the batteries. In the morning drivers would shuttle helpers out, driver release a load of residential deliveries, and the helper would deliver those packages using the golf cart. Despite the obvious safety problems, management thought this was a great idea. This scheme was attempted in a few other areas in the sunbelt.

UPS and Downs

Memphis Feeder Drivers Face Seniority Problem.

Five feeder drivers in Memphis Local 667 have worked every day for a year, and still have not gained feeder seniority. A contract loophole allows UPS to withhold seniority until a driver holds a bid run.

UPS has moved most feeder operation to the huge Oakhaven hub that they built in Memphis. Only 35 drivers remain at the old Carrier Street facility, which also houses the package centers, with five working as extra board drivers. Unlike a traditional extra board with no set start time, these drivers have a "call block." Management can call them to work during a four-hour block; if not called they must report at the end of the block. This is no different than a scheduled start time for a bid driver, which the company can adjust in the South. If further consolidation of the feeder operation occurs, these drivers will either lose their feeder jobs and be forced back to package cars, or be end-tailed on the seniority list behind drivers with less time in feeder. These drivers are fighting to end this injustice.

Workers Happy to Get the Heck Out.

Bill Lichtenwald of Toledo Local 20 has been named to replace Richard Heck as director of the union's Parcel and Small Package Division. Heck has stated that he plans to retire soon.

This does not mark a change in policy in the division. Management still wears a smile.

Minneapolis Area Employees Improve ERI Rating.

In a selfless attempt to improve the Employee Relations Index (ERI), Minneapolis UPS workers created their own survey, with questions more appropriate to UPS's operations such as: When I bring management a problem, they scatter like cockroaches under a flashlight; I learned my job despite the training I received; I get frequent irritating criticism about my work; and, No one notices if I provide excellent service. The reworded survey garnered a 90 percent favorable rating in Minneapolis, and 89 percent among nearby Eagan workers. Contact TDU if you would like to try this survey in your center.

Safety Raffles Hide Problems, Not Solve Them.

In New Jersey Local 177, UPS offered all employees who hadn't reported an injury during a set pre-holiday time a chance at a Christmas Raffle. Such raffles are dangerous and have been opposed by the AFL-CIO.

Encouraging workers not to report injuries may improve safety numbers short term, but long term they can have dire consequences for workers with minor injuries that go unreported. If management proposes a similar problem in your area, contract the Council on Occupational Health and Safety in your area or TDU for assistance.

A Holiday for Management.

On Saturday, December 23 UPS was, as usual, up to their ears in packages. During the prior week management planned to force drivers into work on Saturday. They claimed that language in Article 40 for holidays applied, and therefore full-time drivers would have to work without an eight-hour guarantee. This is a violation of all supplemental contracts. Uniformly across the country, full-time drivers are entitled to eight-hours pay at a premium rate if they are put to work on a **non-holiday**. If a driver reaches the DOT limit of 60 hours per week, then management must provide nondriving work, or pay for the remainder of the eight hours. Also, part-time air **exception** drivers cannot be forced to work on a **non-holiday**.

Rank & File Power at UPS

Fighting for a Strong Union and Respect on the Job

Rank & File Power at UPS tells the story of how UPS workers have fought for respect on the job and in their union.

The 70-page book explores the history of UPS labor relations and how the 1997 strike was built on a foundation of rank and file organization.

It also tells UPS what they can do to protect their jobs and win better working conditions.

\$5 each; \$4 for 25 or more

____ # of books ordered \$____ enclosed

Visa/MC _____

Exp. date ____ / ____ OR ____ check enclosed

Name _____ Local _____

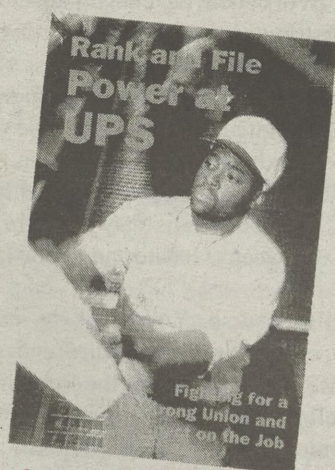
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Return to: TRF, Box 10303, Detroit, MI 48210

Phone: 313-842-2600

Fax: 313-842-0227



Yellow Freight Restructuring

New Change of Operations Targets Regional Freight

Using nonunion competition as a wedge, and poor enforcement on the part of committees as a springboard, Yellow Freight is moving forward with yet another change of operations.

Yellow has said that the nation-wide changes are driven by the need for two-day service, which in turn will help Yellow capture more regional freight. To accomplish their goals, they are moving linehaul drivers to satellite terminals. They are also increasing the use of sleeper teams. These strategies are not new. Yellow has used them in the past, only to shift back again.

Regional LTL is the fastest growing segment of the freight market. Yellow wants a greater share. But where will that share come from? In the East in particular much will likely come from unionized carriers, like Red Star, New Penn, APA and others. This, after all, has been the strategy used by big carriers for years.

So Teamsters at these other union companies will be affected. How much and whether they will be able to follow work and get on at Yellow or another big unionized carrier is another question.

This is one place where the IBT could be more aggressive in bargaining for members' rights.

In the West and Southwest where Saia is strong (and getting stronger), other questions are raised. A possible scenario could be Yellow using their network, size and reputation to capture regional freight and then eventually shifting some of it to Saia. Why wouldn't they if they could? This is why organizing is so important.

The scope of the new change, and its

connection to shifting strategies by unionized carriers, makes it worth reviewing in detail. Here's an overview, region-by-region, of recent and upcoming changes.

Midwest

Here Yellow has broken the terms of prior change of operations. For example, Yellow agreed that drivers from satellites would only go into larger locals to take loads in the event of emergencies. Yellow also said these drivers could not via on forward hauls, only back hauls. That's not how it has played out.

When loads are not making, Yellow sends drivers out to run over other locals. Also, sleeper teams were to be new freight. But if one bill in a load is new freight Yellow claims that the load is "new" and can be sent via teams.

Grievances have been filed — and have waited up to nine months to be heard. Some that stem from the last change will not be heard until after the new change is implemented. And the new change was approved by the change of operations committee before these old issues were resolved.

Southeast

Yellow's last change here resulted in large financial losses for Atlanta drivers. It also opened the door for the use of city drivers for road work out of Miami.

Atlanta drivers had 20 bids going to Orlando. Now there are only eight drivers going to Orlando, with the 12 others going to Jacksonville. Running over 200 miles less per trip, these drivers

What Is Needed to Protect Against Change of Operations

- **Strong Contract Language.** To draw a comparison, UAW contracts bar auto companies from shutting down plants. Because of that, only plants outside the U.S. and Canada are being closed during the current Daimler-Chrysler downsizing. We need language that protects members and limits employer's ability to abuse change of operations.
- **Unity.** More often than not, the company is unified and the union is divided. Employers play one local against another. The result is that we are bound to come up with less if we are not united. The IBT could provide the framework for unity.
- **No Rush Approvals.** Yellow announced its new change in mid-December. By Jan. 16 the deal was signed and sealed.
- **Membership input.** Currently, members are not properly informed of changes. Nor are they provided much of a chance to comment on proposed changes. Rank and file input could be valuable.
- **Streamline Change of Operations Committee's Handling of Grievances.** A backlog of grievances only works in the employers' favor. Yellow is a case in point: new changes are approved before problems from old changes are resolved.

will lose over \$10,000 per year. Jacksonville's breakbulk was closed several years ago, when Saia came in. Local 512 has put in claims for the yard work generated by the increased traffic. Yellow claims it is a temporary policy and is letting linehaul do the work.

In Miami, Yellow is using city people for linehaul work, claiming that the board is full. Of the 16 drivers needed in South Florida, four transferred from Orlando and Yellow hired two. So Yellow's commitment has yet to be met.

West

Here Yellow is closing the Barstow distribution center and the Fontana terminal. Work will be consolidated in a new distribution center located in San Bernardino. Also closed is the Orland relay, replaced by a sleeper operation.

The agreement gives Yellow the right to have San Bernardino drivers via "any points en route in order to avoid running empty." Sleeper teams may also via any points between Orland and Portland, Ore.

And of course, Yellow likely makes out by eliminating work rules and past practices. On one hand, the agreement lets Yellow dump all past practices and work rules in effect at the Barstow and Fontana terminals. On the other hand, Yellow claims the right to use prior grievance decisions when they reinforce their ability to utilize drivers in any way they see fit, or to move freight between any terminals or freight yards.

As is so often the case, past practices apply only when they favor management.

The Southern California changes also come on the heels of Yellow's restructuring of Saia. They announced recently

that WestEx and Action Express would be merged into Saia. When the merger is completed, Saia will cover 21 states from Florida to Washington. And in the same vein, Yellow used the threat of American Freightways to justify the change of operations.

East

In the East, Maybrook, N.Y., will take a big hit, losing 57 road positions. Lancaster and Charlotte will also lose.

This is a continuation of a trend for Maybrook. First, sleeper teams out of Chicago affected a number of end of line terminals, and also chipped away at Maybrook work. Then came the change that shifted drivers to end of line terminals. Maybrook was now bypassed, with freight running directly to Buffalo and other points, stopping once rather than twice (Maybrook and Cleveland).

Here as elsewhere, new changes are approved while grievances are pending over old changes. Syracuse Local 317 has a grievance pending from two changes ago, over a year and counting.

Finally, Yellow gains due to the fact that a number of people will not follow their work. They can then cut the workforce, or replace seniority drivers with new hires making 75 percent.

Teamster Unity and Power Lacking

Unity and power are clearly absent on the IBT side, based on recent events at Yellow. The new change was approved with no meaningful adjustments. The change of operations committee has also failed to move swiftly to stop violations of the last set of changes. If Yellow breaks prior agreements, why are they handed new ones on a silver platter?

Freight Lines

Baltimore Members Picket CF.

Baltimore 557 members have picketed CF twice recently to protest retaliation against steward Sonny Raymond. The latest protest took place on Martin Luther King's birthday. Raymond was fired one day after disagreeing with management over access to information for grievances. The panel provided little justice. Raymond was put back to work, but suffered a lengthy suspension. An employer representative on the committee pointed out to Local 557 that they had not prepared a case for Raymond.

Yellow Drivers Website Now Features Contract Interpretations.

The website www.YellowFreightDrivers.com is a good resource for members at Yellow, as well as other freight Teamsters. It includes recent news, like the new change of operations (including the actual documents), copies of freight contracts, and more. The site now features grievance interpretations. Apparently this is a sore point for certain officials who want to keep information from members, this is a valuable resource. Why won't the IBT do this?

Deutsche Post Buys Airborne.

Deutsche Post has purchased Airborne Express and may be in the market to acquire other U.S.-based air freight carriers. The buyout by this big player in Europe makes it all the more important that our International Union has a plan to combat Airborne's drive for concessions and to organize the whole company. Presently about half of Airborne's U.S. package handlers and drivers are Teamsters, with some under the NMFA and some under white paper agreements.

Safeway Took Huge Losses

Lessons of a Strike

When 1,600 Teamsters went on strike last fall to take on Summit Logistics (distributor for Safeway in Northern California), they knew they were in for a fight. And they deserved the full support of the International Union. But they didn't get it.

The drivers and warehouse workers were taking on big issues, that affect tens of thousands of Teamsters in the food and warehousing industries. They struck to end "activity based pay" (piece work) for drivers, and to end unreasonable, back-ruining production standards in the warehouse.

Safeway Loses Big Bucks in Strike

Corporations usually justify their anti-labor policies by citing the need to cut costs. But look at what Safeway paid in the Summit Strike.

Steve Burd, Safeway CEO, is quoted in the latest *Supermarket News*, an industry journal, saying that Safeway "is still having a hard time believing the cost of the strike." Safeway lost \$140 million in sales, \$24 million in profits, productivity losses of \$49 million, and gross margin losses of \$41 million.

Summit paid scabs \$11 an hour wages, \$11 an hour to the agency that supplied the scabs, plus the scabs' airfare, hotel bills and a meal allowance, which put warehouse expenses 40 percent higher during the strike, while productivity was only 40 percent of normal.

Apparently Safeway would rather spend millions fighting their workers than the same money in meeting their reasonable demands half way.

Atlanta CSI

Local 528 Members Reject Reopener Again

Atlanta CSI members have again rejected a contract offer. Sticking points included extension of the contract for six years (from the current date), and expansion of the management rights clause. Local 528 members were also not thrilled about hourly increases of just 25 cents per year.

Two years ago Ken Hilbish, head of Local 528 and the IBT warehouse division, rushed to sign a contract when Kroger went third party. He gave up Central States pension benefits for warehouse members, handed management broad rights, and gutted the strike/picketing language. Hilbish was the first to settle with CSI and Ruan. His cut-rate contract set a pattern that CSI and Ruan used to hammer

Safeway refused to budge on these big issues. They were willing to lose over \$100 million rather than bargain in good faith. One local could not win them without the full backing of the International, to put the heat on the corporation in a coordinated fashion.

Unfortunately, the Hoffa administration has shown little interest in taking on any big corporation. He backed down against Northwest Air, Anheuser-Busch, Iowa Beef, Chicago ready mix employers, and others. Instead of "restoring the power" with all-out support, the Summit strikers got a promise of support from Hoffa, some help from local area officials, an attack on their strike from International representative Rome Aloise, and *no nationally coordinated action to win.*

The strikers went back to work in December, accepting an agreement that provides wage and benefit improvements, but they did not win on the two ground-breaking issues.

Scapegoating

True to form, the Hoffa administration always has someone else to blame for any problem, sell-out, or weak contract. And often it is none other than Tom Leedham!

In the February *Teamster* magazine the Hoffa campaign makes the ridiculous charge that Leedham failed to back the Summit strikers, as if members would think the head of one local could take on Safeway for them, instead of our mighty International Union.

Leedham is the secretary-treasurer of Local 206 in Oregon. This was probably the only Teamster local outside of California that actively supported the strikers. Local 206 printed leaflets and organized boycott pressure on Safeway

other locals into agreement — though those locals did better than Hilbish.

Rather than take responsibility for his actions, Hilbish blamed others, including Tom Leedham, who had nothing to do with the Kroger third-party negotiations. Then, faced with a tough election in his own local, he asked CSI to reopen bargaining. Kroger/CSI apparently agreed as part of the sell-out of Arizona members.

The reopener has dragged for months. Last March a strike vote was taken, but Hilbish has put management offers up for vote again and again without using it. At the recent meeting he raced to have the vote before many members had gotten into the hall. It didn't work and members voted the offer down.

International Rep Puts Politics First, Strikers Last

- Teamster official Rome Aloise openly told Teamster officials that he would refuse to support 1,600 Teamsters on strike against Summit Logistics because their principal officer supports Tom Leedham and the Rank & File Power campaign.
- Rome Aloise is an International representative appointed by Hoffa, principal officer of Local 853, and a member of the \$100,000 Club.
- *Is this the "unity" Hoffa is always talking about?*

See Election Administrator decision EAD 57 for details on Aloise's advocacy of scabbing on a strike for political gain. Aloise has been ordered to publish a statement on his shameful action in the **Nor Cal Teamster**, so 50,000 Teamsters will know the truth. Aloise appealed the decision to Judge Kenneth Conboy, who affirmed it on Jan. 19 and indicated it could have been stronger.

stores, and sent a sizable donation to the Local 439 strike fund. But Hoffa (and his multiple salary gang) claim Leedham could have magically and single-handedly won the strike, after they turned tail and ran. Local 206 — and Tom Leedham — was ready for action against Safeway on a national scale. More importantly, the 1,600 strikers were ready for that action. It never came.

That is the lesson of the strike against

Safeway. We need coordinated national solidarity action to back Teamster battles. Too often we get leaders like Hoffa and International rep Rome Aloise who put politics first, back down from a fight, and then look for who to blame for their own cowardice.

We need Teamster members and leaders willing and able to take on the big issues. The Summit Teamsters were up to the task. The International officials were not.

Supervalu Drops Out of Kmart Bidding — For Now

In January, Supervalu dropped out of bidding for 100 percent of Kmart's distribution business. Just two weeks before, Kmart had announced they would terminate supply agreements with Fleming and Supervalu, effective June 30. Industry analysts offer a range of opinions on how the Kmart situation may play out.

In one scenario, Supervalu will jump back into bidding if Kmart offers better terms. If they don't, Fleming will likely secure the deal. If that happens, Fleming will have to find a distributor for the northeast. Nonunion C&S Wholesale Grocers is a likely candidate.

Also possible is a merger between Fleming and Kmart. This would give

Kmart a distribution network for most of the U.S. Holes in the network could be filled by third-party operators like Tibbett and Britten.

If Supervalu jumps back in and secures the deal, it will reopen the issue of Teamster pay and benefit rates for the new work. Over a year ago, the IBT Warehouse Division gave Supervalu an exemption from contract provisions, letting them run Kmart work at reduced rates. Some locals fought this two-tier arrangement, but Supervalu had the upper hand with the IBT's blessing. Supervalu will want to continue this special arrangement, creating a giant segment of Teamster work paid at far lower rates.

Get Convoy Dispatch by the Bundle!

Spread the news. Get a bundle of *Convoy Dispatch* each issue to distribute.

Price per issue: ☐ 100-\$12 ☐ 50-\$8 ☐ 20-\$5 ☐ 10-\$3

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Return to: TDU, Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

What's at Stake at the Team

As we go to press, and in the next few months, Teamster locals across the country are holding elections to choose their delegates to the Teamster Convention.

Convention delegates will vote on important reforms to the Teamster Constitution and officially nominate candidates for the 2001 election for International officers.

The decisions made at the Teamster Convention will affect every member. That means you.

- ▶ Will you have the right to a vote and a democratic choice in this year's election for International officers?
- ▶ What actions will the International Union take to involve members in campaigns to win strong contracts in UPS, freight and in local contracts?
- ▶ Will the convention approve reforms that eliminate wasteful spending on outrageous officer salaries and perks and put that money to work for the members like supporting members' fights for better contracts?
- ▶ With Teamster membership falling under Hoffa, what steps will the International take to rebuild the Teamsters organizing department and increase our bargaining power by organizing the non-union competition?

Keep your eye out for information on the convention delegate race in your local union. And support candidates who will support you and your interests at the Teamster Convention.



Members, Not Employers, Must Be Heard

"Hoffa and other top officials know UPS management from golf outings and grievance hearings at cozy resorts.

"Working Teamsters know the real UPS management, the ones who push us for more every day and are never satisfied.

"We need to send delegates to the Teamster Convention who know how UPS managers act in the centers, not on the golf course!

"At the Convention, we need to approve a contract action plan that will involve working Teamsters in setting our bargaining demands and winning a good contract."

Edwin Sanchez
UPS, Candidate on Local 396 Rank & File Power Slate
front row right in photo



The Era of the Union Dictator Must Come to an End

"This is the first contested election that anyone can remember in Local 115. We're running for convention delegate because the era of the union dictator must come to an end.

"Hoffa put our local in trusteeship and promised to restore democracy to the members. But all we've gotten is new dictators who act as puppets to Hoffa.

"The result has been perks and privileges for a select few and weak contract enforcement and second-class membership for the rest of us.

"We've been down that road, and we're not going back. It's time to bring real democracy to the Teamsters.

"Our union does not belong to *any* official. It belongs to the members."

115 Teamsters United Slate: Walt Deminski, Kelly Kozik, Dennis DiCataldo, Alvaro Quinones, Pat Nefferdorf, Curtis Moore
left to right

amster Convention?

Hoffa Flip-Flop Alert!

Will Hoffa Honor His Convention Promises?



At the last Teamster Convention in 1996, candidate Hoffa talked a good game about reform. But how will Hoffa act now that he is Teamster President? Hoffa will control the majority of delegates at the Teamster Convention. He will have the power to pass the very reforms that he gave lip service to at the last Convention.

Will he do so? Or will he block these needed reforms just like Old Guard officials have done for decades?

■ IMMEDIATELY RAISE STRIKE BENEFITS WITH NO DUES INCREASE

Hoffa proposed an immediate hike in weekly strike benefits to "four times the member's monthly dues with a \$100/week minimum and a \$250/week maximum."* Hoffa has taken no action to fulfill this key campaign promise. Will he propose a plan to raise strike benefits without a dues hike at the Teamster Convention?

■ CAP OFFICIALS' SALARIES

At the '96 Convention, Hoffa called for "cutting and capping" the General President's salary to \$150,000 and the salaries of International Vice Presidents and Trustees to \$50,000 a year. But once in office, Hoffa raised his salary by 50 percent and he has not "cut and capped" salaries. In fact, the salaries of the highest-paid Teamster officials jumped by an incredible 30 percent in Hoffa's first year alone. (Source: Teamster LM-2 Reports Filed with the Department of Labor).

■ RIGHT TO ELECT BUSINESS AGENTS

Under the Teamster Constitution, local unions cannot change their bylaws to give members the right to elect their business agents. In 1996, Hoffa supported a reform that would give members the right to choose to have elected business agents. Will he back this reform this time, or will he block it?

■ RIGHT TO ELECT CONVENTION DELEGATES

Hoffa said the Constitution should, "Guarantee the membership's right to vote for delegates to the IBT Convention." We agree. Will Hoffa support a Constitutional amendment at the Convention? If not, our right to elect convention delegates will disappear if and when the government ends its monitoring of our union.

■ NO APPOINTED CONVENTION DELEGATES.

Hoffa's '96 Convention Platform demanded that no appointed delegates, "be given credentials to participate in the Convention." Does that mean Hoffa will not appoint any delegates, or will he stack the Convention with political appointees?

■ ELIMINATE HIDDEN PERKS FOR INTERNATIONAL EMPLOYEES

Under a hidden perk, International employees are actually paid 7.65 percent more than their apparent salary because the union pays the employee portion of their Social Security tax—a payroll tax that working Teamsters pay ourselves. Will Hoffa call for the prohibition of this perk like he did at the last Convention?



Fighting to Protect our Right to Vote

"A lot of members take the Right to Vote for granted. They think that Tom Leedham already has a spot on the ballot in the 2001 election.

"Members don't know that Hoffa is strong-arming union officers and Convention Delegates to try to block all opposition candidates from being officially nominated at the Convention. If he's successful, only Hoffa will appear on the ballot.

"Working Teamsters fought for years to win the right to vote for International officers and convention delegates. We're not about to let Hoffa take it away.

"As convention delegates, we will nominate the Leedham Rank & File Power Slate and guarantee every Teamster member a choice in the 2001 election.

"And we will fight to reform the Teamster Constitution so that Teamster members won't lose their right to elect convention delegates if and when the government ends the consent decree."

Glenn Cisco, Local 313
Convention Delegate candidate on the
Working Teamsters for Tom Leedham Slate
at right in photo

*The source of all information on Hoffa's past promises is "The Hoffa's Slates Convention Platform: Rebuilding the Teamsters." Copies of this document are available from TDU.

Bane Accused of Covering Up Mob Ties

IRB Charges Close Hoffa Associate

Mike Bane, President of Pontiac Local 614, the home local of Teamster President James Hoffa, has been charged by the Independent Review Board (IRB) with lying under oath about his web of organized crime associations. The move could be a major detour to Hoffa's efforts to get the government to stop monitoring corruption in the Teamster leadership.

The IRB charged Bane on Dec. 21 with giving "intentionally misleading testimony concerning your knowledge of, relationship with and association with members and associates of the Detroit La Cosa Nostra Family."

The IRB's 23-page report details Bane's deep involvement with Detroit-area organized crime figures, including Vincent Meli, Vito Giacalone, Anthony LaPiana, Sparky Corrado, and Nove Tocco.

The Bane and Hoffa families have long been close. Mike's father, Joe Bane Sr., went to prison to cover up for Hoffa's father, James R. Hoffa. Mike Bane also served time for embezzling union funds in 1978.

Hoffa transferred into Bane's Local 614 after the leader of his previous local union, George Vitale, was found guilty by the IRB of embezzlement, taking employer payoffs, racketeering, and depriving members of their rights. Hoffa and Bane are expected to run together next month as a team of

delegates to represent Local 614 at the Teamster convention.

The IRB charges are based on testimony from mob figures and Bane's ex-wife, along with wire tap and other FBI evidence. The report details a web of criminal connections emanating from Hoffa's friend and mentor. It alleges that Bane, along with Mafia members, took kickbacks from employers; socialized with mob figures; badly beat up an opponent of a mobster; sought Teamster jobs for mob associates; and assured mobsters that his father testified falsely to cover up for them.

Another Hoffa-mentor, George Vitale, is referred to in the report as "an oft-convicted labor racketeer." A decade ago Hoffa served as Vitale's spokesman, representative and counsel.

Big Test for Hoffa's Talk

The IRB has referred the charges to James Hoffa for action. To date, Hoffa is zero for three on taking action when his close associates have been charged.

Hoffa dismissed IRB-recommended charges against two of his running mates for Teamster vice president — J. D. Potter and Thomas O'Donnell. After Hoffa's whitewash, the IRB stepped in and forced Potter to resign from the union. O'Donnell, a current Teamster vice president, was recently suspended

from office for nine months by the IRB. Potter had been caught laundering \$5,000 in cash into Hoffa's campaign, and O'Donnell was found guilty of covering up putting a convicted felon on Hoffa's campaign staff.

The third case involves IRB-recommended charges against Hoffa's sponsor and former employer Larry Brennan, the top Teamster official in Michigan. Brennan is charged with embezzling \$30,000 from Local 337 for his re-election campaign. Hoffa dismissed the charges; the IRB then conducted a trial on Feb. 5.

Hoffa claims that Teamsters leaders are ready to police themselves, and has spent millions in union funds and resources to urge the end of court-supervised election monitors and of the IRB. Hoffa has set up his own anti-corruption program, Project RISE, with millions in funding. So far the program has produced much PR but taken no action. The program has done nothing about mob associates such as Mike Bane, who are among Hoffa's closest advisors.

The IRB's detailed reports on Hoffa associates Mike Bane, Larry Brennan,



MIKE BANE has had a long career in the Teamsters Union. In 1968 Bane was photographed stomping a Local 299 member for passing out flyers at the local hall. (Photo from "The Hoffa Wars," Dan Moldea)

George Vitale, J.D. Potter, and Tom O'Donnell are all available from the IRB or from TDU. Free to TDU members, others please include donation.

N.Y. Local 840

IRB Report Calls for Trusteeship

The Independent Review Board (IRB) recommended that President Hoffa place New York Local 840 under trusteeship in a Dec. 22 report. As we go to press over a month later Hoffa has yet to act on the recommendation.

Local 840 represents 1,000 technical, industrial and service members. Joel LeFevre, a key political backer of James Hoffa, has been the local's principal officer since 1993.

Lefevre testified before the anti-Teamster hearings held by Congressman Peter Hoekstra (R-Mich) in 1998, where he claimed to have a "deep loyalty to those moral principles of the labor movement which guide us," and that Ron Carey was picking on him by sending an auditor to review his practices.

Hoffa then took no action on the auditor's report, which detailed the mess LeFevre was making of the local. Instead, Hoffa put him in charge of a second local!

The IRB report details extensive financial mismanagement and failure to follow the local's bylaws and the IBT Constitution, including:

Failure to hold membership meetings. Membership meetings were scheduled on weekday afternoons at the local, simultaneous with executive board meetings. A quorum (15 members) was rarely met. LeFevre was uncertain how members were notified of the meetings, but stated

that the lack of a quorum was because "members ... decline to come."

Ineligible members nominated and elected to local office. In 1993, 1996 and 1999, ineligible members — including LeFevre — were nominated and elected without opposition. Lefevre ruled himself eligible in 1996 despite six late dues payments.

Officers failed to perform their duties and raised own perks. Two local 840 trustees admitted to the IRB that they did not even know if the local had its own bank account. Despite the fact that the local was losing money, the executive board voted themselves raises without membership approval, created a 401(k) plan for officers when the local had no money to fund it, and hid officer severance plan liabilities from the members by filing false reports.

Hoffa Promoted Lefevre

In March 2000, Hoffa appointed LeFevre trustee of Garden City Local 806, which the union placed under trusteeship upon an IRB recommendation.

On Oct. 10, 2000, LeFevre proposed to Hoffa that Local 806 be merged into Local 840. The IRB report commented, "How giving control of both locals to a board that has ignored its own basic obligations for years will be a benefit to the members of either local is not apparent."

Ron Carey Indicted

Former Teamster President Ron Carey was indicted on Jan. 25, accused of giving false statements during the inquiry into illegal fund raising activities of his campaign consultants in 1996.

The timing of the indictment, coming nearly five years after the illegal fund raising and with Carey three years into retirement, raises questions about the motivation. Those close to the case speculate that the real target could be AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Rich Trumka.

In the days before the indictment the *Wall Street Journal* called on the Bush administration to press for Trumka's indictment. Some Republicans in Congress, including Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, along with conservatives and business groups, have been campaigning for some time for an indictment against the AFL-CIO's number two leader.

Carey was expelled from the Teamsters Union in 1998 by the Independent Review Board, which ruled that Carey was responsible for the fund raising scandal because he was in a position to stop it and failed to do so.

Carey has steadfastly maintained he was a victim of the plot by his campaign consultants and that he had no involvement. Now he will have his day in court.

Hoffa's Own Lies to Court-Appointed Officers

Teamster President James Hoffa issued a statement welcoming the indictment of his former rival, saying: "The members of

the Teamsters Union have paid a terrible price for the misdeeds of Mr. Carey."

But interestingly, in 1998 Hoffa himself was found by court-appointed Election Officer Michael Cherkasky to have personally decided to file a false report with the EO and the court, and that Hoffa then testified falsely under oath about that report. Hoffa was covering up a \$1,000 contribution he received from former Teamster President Billy McCarthy. He was fined \$1,000 for this act of deception, and his campaign was fined some \$200,000 in all for other illegal acts.

Larry Brennan on Trial by IRB

The Independent Review Board (IRB) conducted a hearing on charges against Larry Brennan and his fellow officers of Detroit Local 337 on Feb. 5. Brennan is the head of the Michigan Joint Council, on the International payroll, and the man who made James Hoffa eligible to run for office by creating a job for him.

Brennan is charged with embezzling \$30,000 in union funds and diverting the money to his re-election campaign.

At the trial, Brennan and his co-defendants called no witnesses. Speculation is that they were concerned about testifying under oath, with a potential grand jury indictment in the picture. The IRB typically takes at least a month to issue a decision.

Rank & File Power Campaign on the Move

Minnesota Welcomes Leedham



Local 2000 member Shelly Worley introduced Tom Leedham at a Minnesota campaign stop.

Minnesota Teamsters were eager to host Tom Leedham for a January campaign stop.

Delegate slates in locals 120, 320, and 638 have been hard at work raising important issues in this election.

Leedham visited a Sysco warehouse in temperatures just above zero degrees in the early morning and got a positive response from members there.

Leedham also spoke to a roomful of supporters from various public sector workplaces, UPS, freight and warehouses about how the union is being weakened by Hoffa's coziness with employers and settling short on important contracts like carhaul. Leedham emphasized the need to rebuild the strength of the union by involving members in contract campaigns and organizing new members.

Next Stop Toronto



Members of Toronto's Local 938 Members Slate with Tom Leedham. Leedham met with the candidates during the TDU Convention last November.

Leedham's next stop on the campaign trail is Toronto, Ontario, where reform activists on the Local 938 Members Slate are mounting a serious challenge to the Hoffa-supporting slate led by Local 938 President Ray Bartolotti.

Leedham will be campaigning hard with Vice President at-Large candidate Willie Smith and Teamsters Canada Vice President candidate John Hull at major worksites throughout the Greater Toronto Area, including Purolator, carhaul, and

freight barns.

"Our campaign has been picking up steam, and Leedham's visit will help us kick it into high gear," says Local 938 Members Slate delegate candidate Rick Mazak. "Bartolotti and company are running scared now, using employer and union resources to try and intimidate us and promote themselves. But members see through Bartolotti's hot air, and they're responding to our reform message."



Newest addition to the Tom Leedham Rank & File Power Slate T.C. Bundrant, President of Tennessee Local 549, is a candidate for trustee. T.C. has been on the campaign trail, meeting with members in North Carolina and Virginia, traveling to Atlanta and other areas, and helping to build campaign organization and spread the message of Rank & File Power. Bundrant is pictured at left above with Local 171 member Allen Bunch.

Election Officers Finds Dirty Tricks Hoffa Campaign Caught in the Act

It is early in the campaign for Teamster president and International officers, but already the Hoffa campaign has been caught in dozens of illegal acts. These include using union funds and resources to campaign for Hoffa; officials tearing down Leedham literature; using over 500 local unions as campaign offices to receive Hoffa literature; using union publications to campaign for Hoffa; and even advocating scabbing on a strike of 1,600 Teamsters to punish a union officer for backing the Rank & File Power Slate.

Here are a few samples of legal decisions by the Election Administrator. (All EA decisions are available on-line at www.ibtvote.org.)

International Rep Rome Aloise was caught when he told a meeting of union officials he would refuse to back a strike of 1,600 Teamsters at Summit Logistics because their principal officer backs the Leedham Slate. The Election Administrator ordered him to print a statement in the *Nor Cal Teamster* newspaper to inform all 50,000 members there of his shameful advocacy of scabbing. (2000 EAD 57)

Hoffa's Public Employee Director Carl Haynes placed a Hoffa campaign press release in the *Local 237* newspaper and mailed it to 21,000 Teamsters. The EA ordered that Leedham material must now be mailed to those members so they can see both sides. (2000 EAD 68)

Ray Bartolotti, who heads the Hoffa Canadian Unity Slate in **Toronto Local 938**, has been caught violating members' rights so many times by the Election Administrator that he has been ordered to mail, at his own expense, a statement of his violations to 10,500 members. He has been informed that one more violation and he will be removed from the ballot in that local. (2001 EAD 104)

The **Hoffa campaign** was caught again using the **fax machines** of over 500 local unions to receive Hoffa literature and serve as distribution centers for the Hoffa campaign. As recently as Jan. 31, the EA again wrote the Hoffa campaign a letter banning such use of union resources. (2000 EAD 8)

The **International Union** failed to mail the October/November **Teamster magazine**, with Leedham and Hoffa campaign pages in it, to 39,000 Teamsters in the state of Minnesota. Members complained, but the December issues also did not arrive. General Secretary-Treasurer Tom Keegel, who also heads the Minnesota joint council, didn't get around to solving the problem until members filed a protest. It was determined that the TITAN system failed. New magazines are now being printed and mailed. (2001 EAD 126)

Waymon Stroud, president of **Local 728**, was caught using local union equipment and personnel to set up a payroll deduction plan for the purpose of raising funds for the **Stroud/Hoffa Slate**. (2000 EAD 5)

In **Hawaii Local 996**, officials who have Hoffa's endorsement submitted a Local Union Plan for their delegates election in which the officers were declared the winners — without ever holding an election! They thought the members wouldn't notice, but they were wrong.

Election Rule Books Available

Rules for the 2000-2001 delegate and officer election are now available in book form from the Election Administrator.

Contact the EA by calling 202-454-1500 or toll free at 800-565-VOTE. You may also fax your request to 202-454-1501.

Local Unions and Reform

Members Press Forward; Old Guard Pushes Back

Is your local union moving forward, sliding backward, or standing still? Across our union, members are proving that we can win better contracts, stronger representation and more democratic unions.

This kind of positive change takes involved members who are backed by leaders with a reform agenda. In several locals featured here, members are putting that formula to work to

move their unions forward.

This reform movement is viewed as a threat to top Teamster officials. Too often, their response is to try to silence active members and block needed reforms.

Below are some recent examples of how members are successfully moving our union forward, and how old guard officials are trying to drag us back.

New Day in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

After a long fight, UPS mechanic and TDU activist Bill Nelson and his slate ousted the incumbents in Michigan Local 328, which covers the entire Upper Peninsula.

Now members have an administration that is fighting for them. The knowledge that their new union representatives will give them straight answers and go to bat for them is giving members the confi-

dence and knowledge they need to stand up to management.

Following the election, the deposed president of the local asked that the local be put in trusteeship, claiming that the local had not been audited in many years. He then cut himself and the secretary-treasurer \$20,000 severance checks without proper approval just before leaving office.

Seattle Local 174

'Local Autonomy' or Rigged Election?

It was a very close election in the 7,000-member Seattle Local 174, with reform leader Bob Hasegawa and his slate running against challengers that were heavily bankrolled by the Hoffa forces. It came down to the challenged ballots. There were 59 challenged ballots, and Hasegawa trailed by five votes.

Then Hoffa ordered that the International would take control of the count. This unprecedented move — the International taking over a local count in process — allowed the outcome to be rigged.

With a few challenged votes counted, Hasegawa was down by two votes out of 3,000 cast. At this point Hoffa's "personal representative" ordered that the votes cast by UPS Teamsters on check-off, whose

initiation fees had not been properly deducted by the company, would not be counted. This decision is against the regulations of the Department of Labor and common fairness, but the decision was made. The fix was in.

At a campaign party in January with 200 supporters present, Hasegawa and other reform leaders announced their candidacy for delegates to the IBT Convention. They also intend to see that all the members' properly-cast votes are counted. They have pursued an internal union protest and a protest with the IBT Election Administrator, because Hoffa's actions were as a result of Hasegawa being on the Tom Leedham Rank & File Power Slate.

Chicago Local 743 Bylaws Proposals

Officials Propose Less Democracy

Bob Walston, secretary-treasurer of Local 743, would like to see less democracy in this Chicago local. He and his old-guard clique have proposed bylaws amendments to do just that.

The local's current bylaws are a model of democratic practices, but the local officers see them as a threat. Democracy levels the playing field for all members to get involved in the union, but the old guard would rather have dictatorship.

The proposed bylaws would:

- Eliminate the requirement that stewards stand for election every three years.
- Eliminate members' right to petition for a steward election.
- End the current two-month campaign period in local elections. The time between nominations and ballots going out would be cut to the legal minimum of 30 days.

- Eliminate the right of all candidates for local office to have campaign material printed in the local union newsletter.

Under these proposals, an elected steward aligned with the incumbent officers could be elected for life. Stewards opposing the incumbents could be removed by the executive board at any time. Members unhappy with their shopfloor representation would be out of luck.

Tying shop stewards' positions to loyalty to the incumbents, instead of the members, decreases the effectiveness of the steward system. And eliminating campaign materials in the local newsletter makes it harder for rank and file candidates to get their message to the members.

Walston and his buddies fear democracy. Hopefully the members of Local 743 will see that this fear can only weaken their local, giving the employers the upper hand in the end.



NEW LOCAL 2000 OFFICERS TAKE CHARGE: The Flight Attendant Mobilization Slate beat their Hoffa-backed opponents in Local 2000's officer election and they're well into the business of running their local, despite Hoffa's continuing moves to undermine their leadership. Their victory underscores the membership's desire to continue democratic reforms and member involvement in the local. The winning slate, headed by Danny Campbell, took their oath of office with Tom Leedham present.



D.C. Members Elect New Leaders

Bill Gibson, a tireless fighter for worker rights, was elected as president of Washington, D.C., Local 96.

Gibson (pictured at left), Vice President Warren Davis, and the rest of their slate campaigned on the theme of member mobilization. This clearly appealed to the members of Local 96, who have battled hard over the years to win respect from Washington Gas, the local's major employer.

After taking office, Gibson has kept his salary low and begun the task of moving Local 96 forward.

Members Have Voice in New Local 556

Last August, Local 556 members swept Maria Martinez and the Members' Voice Slate into office by a three-to-one margin over Hoffa's hand-picked candidate.

In less than six months in office, the new leadership is following through on their promise to give members a voice and a vote in their union and the information they need to defend their rights on the job:

Steward elections: Members have elected more than 20 new stewards in the local's major shops.

Steward training: More than 25 stewards attended the first in a series of shop steward trainings where members discussed how to strengthen grievances by involving members in the grievance process. A second stewards' seminar is being held as we go to press.

Contract campaign: Negotiations will soon begin on a contract covering some 600 workers at Smith Frozen Food. Member participation in the bargaining process is already at an all-time high.

More than 100 workers have turned out twice for Smith contract campaign

meetings—this during the off-season when two-thirds of the workforce is laid off.

For the first time, members have had a real say in determining their contract goals, which include higher wages, safer and more sanitary working conditions, and treatment with respect and fairness. Hundreds of workers filled out bargaining surveys.

"Before the union wasn't for us, it was for the company," said Tricia Givens, a fork lift driver at Smith. "Now we're organizing and communicating more. We want Smith to be a good place to work. We want to be able to say, 'I'm proud to work at Smith Frozen Foods.'"

The negotiations with Smith will not be easy. Until 1996, the plant's powerful owner was Gordon Smith, the notoriously right-wing U.S. Senator from Oregon. After his election, Smith transferred his stock to his wife.

Local 556 leaders are reaching out for community support. They recently held a meeting with Portland Jobs with Justice, a coalition of unions and community groups.

Federal Court Issues Injunction, Stops Hoffa's Take-Over of Local Union

Federal judge Charles A. Pannell issued an injunction on Feb. 8 to end the take-over of Atlanta Local 728 by the Hoffa administration.

The next morning Don Scott, the elected president of the 7,000-member local, reclaimed his office.

"This victory says the *members* choose who our local officers are — not Hoffa or anyone else — the members should control our local union," UPS package car driver Randy Brown told us. "We need a local that taps the power of the members, and leaders who work to unify us."

Doug Mims, a long-time TDU and reform leader in Local 728, said, "It's a good day for Teamster democracy. It's time for a change in Local 728. We need a local accountable to the rank and file, not to the big shots."

The federal court affirmed the members' right to elect their own leaders. Hoffa, working with his supporters Ken Redding and Waymon Stroud in Local 728, illegally took away that right. In October 2000 Hoffa refused to allow the elected president to return to office after a one-year suspension.

Scott, a supporter of Tom Leedham and the Teamster reform movement, had been barred by Hoffa from returning to his position after a suspension. Scott had been suspended from office by Hoffa for a full year on a charge of taking a pay raise before it was authorized by the executive board. But last October Hoffa ruled Scott could never return to his elected position, and would be permanently replaced by Hoffa's man, Waymon Stroud.

The trial in late January in Atlanta federal court revealed the plot.

Scott's attorney, Betty Grdina of Washinton, D.C., forced the International to turn over a letter that Stroud sent Hoffa in which Stroud suggested that Hoffa use his power to "interpret" the IBT Constitution to let him take over; in the letter he pointed out this would help Hoffa's re-election campaign. Hoffa then issued that interpretation. (Stroud was found by the election administrator last August to have illegally set up a union-sponsored Hoffa/Stroud Fund.)

The trial also revealed that Hoffa's "personal representative," Vince Hick-

man, threatened the members of the executive board that the local would be put into trusteeship unless they installed

tion campaign. Then Hoffa did in fact concoct this "interpretation."

So much for local autonomy.

IBT attorney Gary Witlen was put on the stand as an "expert witness" to try to explain the interpretation. But it was not an interpretation, it was a takeover. The judge ruled that the interpretation of the IBT constitution is "patently unreasonable." Judge Pannell also noted the political motivation in the move to block the return of the elected president.

Stroud as president.

So first Hoffa, through his personal representative, used an illegal threat of trusteeship to temporarily install his supporter. Then his supporter illegally used his office to campaign for Hoffa. Then he sent Hoffa a letter requesting that he simply stay in office, and reminded Hoffa that it would help Hoffa's reelection

IBT attorney Gary Witlen was put on the stand as an "expert witness" to try to explain the interpretation. But it was not an interpretation, it was a takeover. The judge ruled that the interpretation of the IBT constitution is "patently unreasonable." Judge Pannell also noted the political motivation in the move to block the return of the elected president.

Carhaul News

Selkirk, N.Y. Local 294

Local Helps Allied Push Flex

Using threats and intimidation, Allied Systems is rewriting the Eastern Carhaul Supplement. Sadly, some locals and the IBT are letting it happen without a fight.

The latest attack was at Allied in Selkirk, N.Y. For months management there has been pushing for a flex work week for drivers. In the fall, members voted it down solidly.

Under the threat of lost work, and right after layoffs, Allied came back. This time they worked with Local 294 to test the waters, to see how much they could get.

One final offer was passed out, then another with small changes, then yet another. And when members went to vote on Jan. 7, the offer was changed yet again. During the meeting, opposition was still high. Then Local 294 President John Bulgaro told members that Anchor and Fleet Car had gone under exactly because they

were not given concessions.

Member Unity Gets Important Changes

Local 294 members had met before the union meeting and were prepared to push hard. As a result they were able to get important changes, including the elimination of a Tuesday-through-Saturday dispatch and a reduction in the number of trucks involved.

Now Allied will go to other locals, using the Selkirk agreement to whipsaw them into line.

The situation is exactly what the IBT should step in and prevent. Unity in this case would mean the IBT and locals and members unified to stop Allied's attacks. That's not the case. That's why we need to build TDU and change the way our union works.

action and work to expand it.

We need more than isolated pressure on GM and other auto companies. We need a national program, up to and including a contract that brings in the auto makers. When the IBT launched a successful drive in the early 1990s to address double-breasted nonunion outfits, that was a good start. The same program needs to extend to the shippers.

Pattern of Attacks on Local Unions

The exposure of Hoffa's illegal take-over of Local 728 is important because similar tactics are at work in other local unions where Teamsters are standing up for good contracts or for Teamster reform.

- Hoffa currently has "personal representatives" making similar threats of trusteeship in Tacoma Local 313, Northwest Airlines Local 2000, and others.
- He took over the local union vote count in Seattle Local 174 and refused to count all the votes cast by UPS Teamsters, in a move designed to defeat reform leader Bob Hasegawa.
- He was caught in federal court in Washington illegally removing an-

other reform leader, Maria Martinez, from office; she subsequently defeated the Hoffa-backed candidate by a three-to-one margin to head Local 556.

- He has strong-armed endorsements from a number of local officials.
- His International representative, Rome Aloise, was recently found guilty of openly calling for no support to 1,600 strikers because their principal officer backs Tom Leedham.

It's time for members and officers alike to follow the example of Georgia Teamsters and stand up to this attack on our rights, expose it, and bring accountability to all levels of our union.

Teamster Striker Awarded \$2.5 Million by Jury

On the heels of Hoffa declaring to have settled the 5-and-a-half year fight with the Detroit Newspapers, a Teamster member from the struggle won a real victory.

A federal jury has awarded fired Local 2040 Teamster Ben Solomon \$2.5 million in his suit against Detroit Newspapers and the City of Sterling Heights, where the papers' printing plant is located.

Solomon was badly beaten by police on the picket line on Labor Day 1995 during a confrontation in which police threw tear gas canisters into the crowd. The jury found that the newspapers and the city had conspired to deny Solomon's freedom of speech and had used excessive force to arrest him without probable cause. Two million dollars of the award was punitive damages.

The jury heard that Detroit Newspa-

pers met with the Sterling Heights police six months before the contract expired and asked them to prepare a plan. The newspapers paid for all overtime caused by the strike, bought pepper spray for the police department, and supplied videos of confrontations from the San Francisco newspaper strike.

The jury found that the police had violated Solomon's civil rights as a matter of written policy. The department had suspended its requirement that any use of force be documented.

"They took it right between the eyes," says Solomon. "I hope it will help others down the road. City officials will have to recognize that if they take money, they're going to be conspirators and felons."

(Excerpt from *Labor Notes*, February 2001. For article, call: 313-842-6262.)

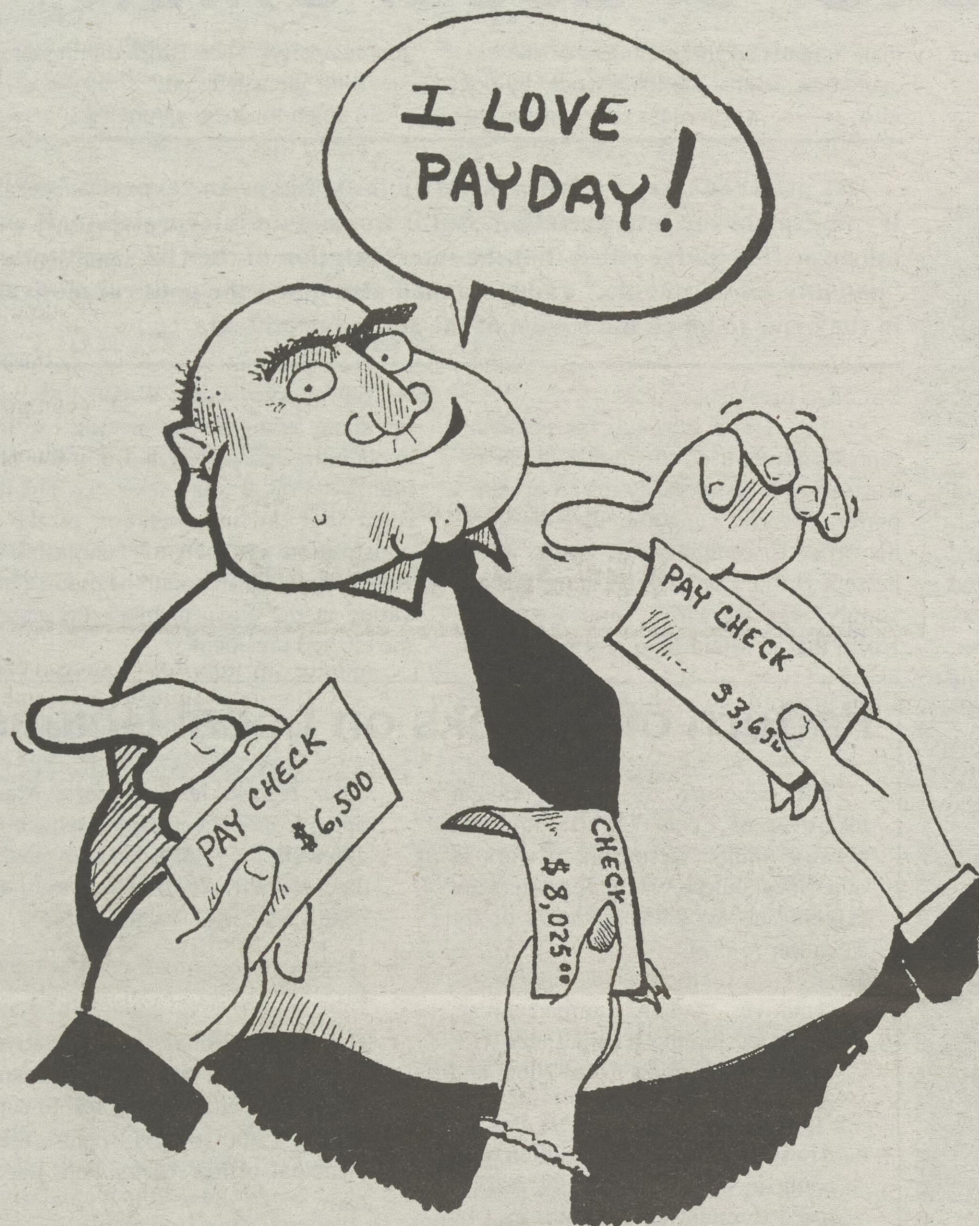
Teamsters Fight Back

Sierra Mountain Takes Minnesota Jobs

Sierra Mountain, the nonunion carrier that has taken GM and Chrysler carhaul work at several railheads, has moved into the Midwest. GM has awarded traffic out of Minneapolis to Sierra Mountain, with some 50 Allied Teamsters losing their jobs.

Local 120 has announced hand billing at GM dealers to put pressure on the auto maker. All Teamsters should support the

What's Wrong With This Picture?



MULTIPLE SALARIES are on the rise under the Hoffa administration. Delegates to the Teamster Convention can change this by amending the IBT Constitution and putting our dues money to work for the members.

You CAN do something to change the picture!

- Delegates to the Teamster Convention have the power to change the Teamster Constitution.
- The delegates you elect in your local to represent you will vote on amendments to the constitution and to nominate candidates for International office.
- Make your vote count by electing delegates who will represent working Teamsters in Las Vegas.

Support Reform Delegates to Represent You at the Teamster Convention!

JOIN TDU

TDU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Company _____

e-mail address _____

☐ City ☐ Road ☐ Dock ☐ Clerical ☐ Warehouse ☐ Construction ☐ Production

other _____

___ \$35 one-year membership & subscription to *Convoy Dispatch*.

___ \$85 three-year membership fee. (\$10 shall be rebated to the local chapter)

___ \$20 for spouses, and Teamsters who gross less than \$17,000 a year.

___ \$20 for retirees. Retired from Local _____

Check or money order

Mastercard/Visa # _____ Exp. date ____/____/____

Date _____ Signature _____

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

TDU membership is kept confidential. TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations only from Teamsters, retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers. Only funds from Teamster members and their spouses can be used for campaign purposes.

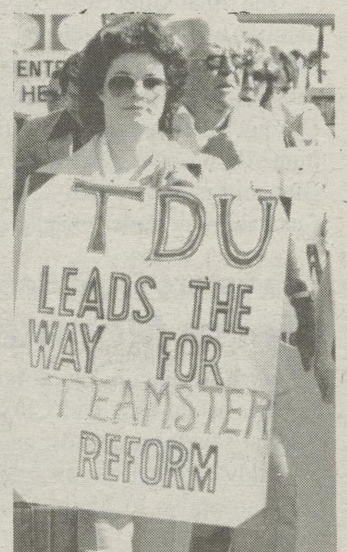
"In 1981 I was one of a handful of delegates to the Teamster Convention in Las Vegas. It was the first time an organized reform force spoke up at a Teamster Convention, and the union officials did not welcome our presence.

"It took a lot of courage to speak out on the convention floor, but we did, calling for the Right to Vote for our International officers, an Ethical Practices Committee, reasonable limits on officers' salaries and majority rule on contracts.

"Yes, we lost every proposal we made — then. But our organized presence began to change the culture of our union. We kept on fighting, and today we have won many of the reforms we fought for in 1981.

"TDU has always been the backbone of the reform movement in the Teamsters And we need it today as much as we did in 1981. If you haven't joined yet, I hope you will today."

Diana Kilmury
Local 155, Vancouver, B.C.



Diana Kilmury at the 1981 Teamster Convention